

RHOPALIDIA LEPELETIER, 1836 (HYMENOPTERA : VESPIDAE):
PROPOSED SUPPRESSION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS.
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Guérin-Ménéville (*in* Duperrey, 1831 : Plate IX, fig. 8) published the generic name *Ropalidia* for the single new species, *R. maculiventris* (see Bequaert, 1918 : 244). Since Bequaert pointed this out, the name *Ropalidia* has been used instead of *Icaria* de Saussure, 1853 : 22, plates 4, 5, for a large genus, containing many species in all tropical countries except America.

2. Lepeletier (1836 : 538) published a genus *Rhopalidia* for (p. 539) *Rh. rufithorax* and *Rh. pallens*, two American species, now known as *Polybia sericea* (Olivier, 1791) and *Stelopolybia* (*Angiopolybia*) *pallens* (Lep.), respectively. This was an independent foundation, based on quite different insects from *Ropalidia*. Although in 1838-9 (in the text accompanying the plates of Duperrey's work) Guérin-Ménéville adopted Lepeletier's spelling, he pointed out that his own species, *R. maculiventris* was too different to require comparison with the two described by Lepeletier.

3. Schultz (1912 : 60), discussing Lepeletier's genus, pointed out that *Rh. rufithorax* Lep. had already been synonymised with *Polybia sericea* (Olivier) by de Saussure and that *Rh. pallens* Lep. was a synonym of *Polybia infernalis* de Saussure, 1854. This latter species had been included by Ducke (1910 : 517) in his new genus *Stelopolybia*. Schulz therefore suggests that *Rh. pallens* Lep. should be regarded as the type of *Rhopalidia* which should replace *Stelopolybia*. Under a more recent system, *Angiopolybia* Araújo, 1946 (type *Rhopalidia pallens* Lep.) has been separated from *Stelopolybia* Ducke and *Rhopalidia* Lep. would replace the generic name *Angiopolybia*.

4. However, it is highly undesirable to have two different genera within the Vespidae called *Ropalidia* and *Rhopalidia*. Lepeletier's genus has not appeared in the literature, apart from Schulz's reference, except as a synonym of *Polybia* Lepeletier in von Dalla Torre's Catalogue (1894).

The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is therefore requested to:

- (1) use its plenary powers to suppress the name *Rhopalidia* Lepeletier, 1836, for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy;
- (2) place the generic name *Rhopalidia* Lepeletier, 1836 (as suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) above) on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid generic names in Zoology.

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